

2420

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Summary: A way of life in the 25th century with a twist!

2420

ON A SMALL GREEN PLANET

Doonwee slipped through the hatch and locked it behind her. Finally! She was home and safe within her own little cubicle once more. Life didn't seem so bad once she reached home, but every day in the shoots and el's she faced the same old thing. Nothing in life was sure, and all safety meant was having more nerve than the next person... After all, the next person might be one of them!

Do slipped out of her allcover and tossed it in the locker with her other gear. It felt good to get out of the rough heavy noisy suit, but on the shoots it was comforting to feel it's weight and hear it's rustle as one walked along. She punched up the ComLink on her way to the shower, and listened to the latest dataflow over the sound of the frothy water hissing from the shower jets. Once she had soaked down well, she stripped off her underalls, and put them into the washer. Then she washed her hair and finished a nice relaxing shower. With the oxygenated antiviral antibacterial water supply, it was like washing in champaign or ginger-ale. She let the water run over her till she could feel the tingle of it relax her, and then she hit the switch and turned to the blower and dried off.

Pulling on her wrap-up, she went back in to where the ComLink was droning on about some mass attack in the double "R" sector, and how many had been discontinued.

WHY DID THEY HAVE TO FILL THE COMLINK WITH ALL THAT CRAP! IT HAPPENED EVERY DAY. NOBODY NEEDED TO BE REMINDED OF IT. IF THEY WERE FOOL ENOUGH TO WANDER AROUND OUTSIDE THE PROTECTED ZONE, THEY MUST HAVE EXPECTED TO BE DISCONTINUED, AND MAYBE THEY WERE JUST TIRED OF FIGHTING. MAYBE IT WAS BETTER, WHEN YOU GOT OLD, TO JUST GO OUT AND GET IT OVER WITH QUICKLY.

Do wasn't ready for any kind of end, but she had thought about it from time to time. You couldn't help it when it faced you every day all day long. Life had become much different since they came...or were recognized...well, not recognized exactly, but known. One had no way of knowing one of them from one of us until it happened, and then it was too late. Nobody ever saw it either. It was always the same. One was caught alone in the open, and she was done. It might be the next door neighbor or a teacher or friend. One never knew. They were insidious in their ways, and seemed to enjoy gaining trust and friendship before they struck. Maybe it was part of their mating game, but it was a cruel way to take a person's future from them.

Monny had been done, and Do had known her for her whole life. Monny was not tough, and she had a trusting nature. It had cost her dearly. She had been done, and nothing could be done to make her live again. She was one of them now, and she had one of their own growing inside her. It was almost enough to make Do want to discontinue her dear friend, but nobody could do that...even for a friend. She would be left to survive and care for their hatchling.

Do had seen Monny once since then, with her oh so terribly distended stomach, and she smiled, but didn't mean it.

HOW COULD SHE FORGET HER DEAR FRIEND, EVEN IN SIGHT OF WHAT HAD HAPPENED. IT WASN'T HER FAULT, BUT SHE WAS NO LONGER ACCEPTABLE. DO FELT THE SICK FEELING OF IT, AND WONDERED WHAT IT WAS LIKE TO HAVE SOMETHING LIKE THAT LIVING THING CRAWLING AROUND INSIDE ONE'S SELF. SHE WAS FRIGHTENED AT THE IDEA OF HER CURIOSITY. SHE HAD NO WISH TO FIND OUT, OR HAD SHE THE WISH TO KNOW ONE OF HER FRIENDS COULD BE TOUCHING HER AND ONE DAY DO HER AS SOME FRIEND HAD DONE MONNY. OF COURSE MONNY COULD NOT WARN ANYONE OF THE ONE WHO HAD DONE HER BEING BLANKED AS THEY ALWAYS DID. SHE KNEW NOTHING OF IT TILL SHE WENT TO THE MEDTECH SHOP, AND WAS TURNED OUT.

TURNED OUT...JUST LIKE THAT, AND IT HAD TO BE TOO. ONE DAY SHE HAD BEEN ONE OF US, AND DO HAD OPENED HER DOOR TO MONNY IN FRIENDSHIP. NOW SHE WOULD SLAM THE DOOR IN HER FACE IF SHE DID COME...THOUGH SHE WOULDN'T. EVEN MONNY KNEW SHE MUST NOT EXPECT TO BE WELCOME. SHE WOULD NEVER ASK IT OF ANYONE. SHE KNEW HER PLACE.

Do left Monny behind in her thoughts as she fixed her meal and settled down for the night. A good night's sleep was needed when one had to work as hard as she did. She ate her D4 packet and drank a half ration of meed. It wasn't all that good, but it did keep the body going and functioning at a good efficiency rate.

She pulled down her mock and locked it in place. After she canceled the light, she placed her wrap-up on the rail and stretched out in her mock. In the dark of the night she lay there and did her folding.

HALF OF ALL I AM...I BE, AND HALF OF WHAT I BE IS ME. I'M A HALF OF WHAT YOU SEE, AND WHAT YOU SEE IS HALF OF ME. HALF OF ME IS ALSO LIGHT AND HALF OF THAT IS SHINING BRIGHT. HALF OF BRIGHT IS NOW AGLOW, AND INWARD, INWARD NOW I GO. FOLDING INWARD MEETING ME, THE OTHER HALF OF DESTINY. HALF AND HALF AND HALF AGAIN TILL HALF PAST NOW I DO BEGIN. FOR HALF OF ALL IS POETRY, AND SLEEP THE POETRY I FREE. HALF AND HALF AND... HALF.... AND..... HALF.....

AND.....

Do sleeps away the night as around her in the shoots and el's of the world outside life and it's counterpart meet head to head. In the morning she will get up and go back into the outside. She will put on her metal mail, with it's noisy song, and it's overcoat of protection against the radiation and poisonous atmosphere, and walk out into the path of what might be a friend or one of the others. She won't know, and without her system of survival, she may never know. She will just be content to discontinue anyone who comes closer than her ten step limit.

For Doonwee there will never be a touch or the closeness of holding hands or embracing. She will live her life within the confines of her own prison of safe passage. She will live only if she keeps her pact to never allow anyone to become close enough to trust within her boundaries. Sadly she will die one day anyway, and leave no other behind to follow in her path, but even that is better than being done by one of the others and leaving behind another of their kind to one day destroy our world as they have their own. Better to loose all the people than to help populate the world with their kind.

Do looks out for herself and if one should come to close, she warns them. If they do not heed her warning, she hesitates not to look into the eyes of this other and discontinue it's existence. These creatures... these monsters from that dirty little planet third from the sun must not be allowed to do to this world what they did to their world. We must not become what they have become, and think we have the right to go out into the galaxy and colonize any planet we wish. They must not succeed in taking over this ninth planet as they did the seventh.

Her survival was in having more nerve than the next person... After all, the next person might be one of them!

I. M. Rolland, 1991

End
file.